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# SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

SPRING 1996

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MAR 11 1997

NEW YORK  
BOTANICAL GARDEN



ELTON and ALINE HANSENS  
Editors

## WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

President:	Don Herrman	Treasurer:	Elaine Montgomery
Vice President:	Dean Crawford	Recorder:	Erika Parmi
Secretary:	Laverne Pearson	Historian:	Louise Foresman

### FROM THE PRESIDENT.....DON HERRMAN

Ah, the Storm of '96!! Our first program this year was postponed until our Annual Meeting. If you were able to attend the annual meeting you reaped the benefits of both meetings---good food and a fine program.

At the annual meeting it was again demonstrated that the state of the WCBC is very good. This is due to the volunteerism of our own members. People like our Honorees, Anne Ulinski and Millie Pearson and other members contribute so much--THANK YOU one and all. But let's not forget our hospitality committee Margaret and Carl Byrd and Margaret and Frank Conger---what would we do without them! They were right there working out all the room and food arrangements. Another big thank you from all of us.

As the snow melted, our program schedule for February/June 1996 was mailed. Thank you to those who planned, typed and distributed the new schedule. If you wish to help put together the next one, please let me know.

When I was enjoying the snow, tubing down our hill, I would end up face down at our meadow. I wondered aloud--Will spring flowers possibly bloom here? In a couple months we will find out. Then we will be out on the trails discovering what a beautiful and rewarding area this is.

To be prepared for spring please read and re-read the front page of our current schedule. It pretty well sums up what we need to do to get the most out of our meetings and field trips.

Playing in the snow is fun---but so is botanizing with the club. Be seeing you!

### WCBC TREASURER'S REPORT, 1995

Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1995	\$482.85
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#### Receipts

Dues	976.00
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Donations	2,066.67
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Interest	15.51
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	<u>\$3,541.03</u>
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#### Disbursements

Schedules	161.50
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Shortia	248.74
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Members List	20.99
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Postage	173.26
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Plant Lists	84.91
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#### Contributions:

N.C. Arboretum	40.00
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UNCA Botanical Garden	40.00
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Annual Meeting & Cookie Fest	28.19
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Historian	5.43
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	<u>\$903.02</u>
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Balance on hand, Dec. 31, 1996	\$2,638.01
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Elaine Montgomery, Treasurer

WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES  
January 19, 1996, St. John in the Wilderness Church

Attendance 48

The meeting began with the reading of the minutes of the 1995 Annual Meeting, which were accepted as read.

The treasurer's report was read by Elaine Montgomery, showing a year end balance of \$2638.01. Club president Don Herrman explained that this figure, so much larger than last year's balance of \$482.85, was due to a \$2000 bequest to the club from Harry Logan. Harry had specified that this money be used for "the bulletin", by which, it has been concluded, he meant Shortia and the schedule.

The recorder, Erika Parmi, informed the members that the details of her report would appear in the spring Shortia. She thanked everyone who had helped with recording during the year. Erika reminded us that several new field trips had been introduced during 1995, and were well received, and asked for suggestions for other new locations.

Elton Hansens, as co-editor of Shortia, indicated that no report, as such, was necessary, saying that Shortia stands for itself. He again encouraged all members to submit articles of interest to the club.

The Honors Committee, composed of Elton Hansens, Sam Childs and Dick Smith chose 2 members, Anne Ulinski and Millie Pearson, to be proposed for Life Membership. The vote in favor of this action was unanimous.

The Nominating Committee, having asked the incumbent officers to serve again in 1996, presented this slate to the members. All officers were elected unanimously for another year.

The president, in his report, remarked that he had noticed the members were taking more safety precautions on field trips; for example, more were using walking sticks. He also reminded us to be aware of each other, making sure everyone was accounted for before leaving a location.

Don asked for announcements. Elton Hansens and Louise Foresman informed members that Dorothy Rathmann, after her death in July 1995, had left botanical slides and books which were available to whomever would like to have them. Louise told us that at Carolina Village a plaque in Dorothy's memory had been installed in the garden that she had created. The death of Margaret Johnstone in October was reported.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned, followed by the traditional potluck meal.

After lunch Anne Ulinski and Millie Blaha presented a program called "On Borrowed Time". This program had been cancelled the previous week because of bad weather.

LaVerne Pearson, Secretary.

## RECORDER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1995.....ERIKA S. PARMIR

First of all, I would like to thank all the recorders for a job well done.

In the past year several new field trips were introduced. They were: South Pacolet River on April 3, Givens Estates on April 17, Sutton Ridge on May 1, Chandler Preserve on May 12, and Coon Branch Trail on Oct. 27 (which had to be cancelled). All of the others were enthusiastically received. Let's try to find more! If any of you know of some good spots, please tell me about them and we will investigate them.

In 1995, 41 field trips (this includes the 2 picnics at the Herrman's) and 2 overnights were scheduled. Of these the October picnic and 5 field trips were cancelled due to rain or threatening weather. The Grandfather Mountain overnight was cancelled due to lack of interest.

The participation rate was almost the same as last year. We had a total attendance of 688 for the 36 field trips that were held. The average attendance was 19 people. Last year's statistics were 689 and 19. The 3 most popular trips were March 24 to Pearsons Falls with 45 in attendance, Herrman's picnic on June 23 with 35 and Charlie Moore's on April 14 with 32.

For this year's statistics I counted only those species in bloom even though we saw and identified other plants of interest. On 7 trips we found more than 50 species in bloom---they were April 14 - Charlie Moore's, April 19/21 - Snowbird Lodge, May 9 - Tanbark Tunnel, May 17 - Sugarloaf Mountain, June 9 - Heintooga, June 30 - Grassy Ridge and Sept. 15 - Frying Pan Gap. Half the trips provided us with at least 30 species in bloom.

Now at the mid-point of one of our snowiest and coldest winters; the welcome signs of spring are all around us. Yes, they really are! The many buds on rhododendron and dogwood promise a good year of bloom.. The varied calls of the Carolina wren and the cheerful whistles and chatter of the chickadees and titmice anticipate the warmer weather. Some of the eager gray squirrels already are engaged in their late winter chases. And, last but not least, my instincts tell me it's going to be a great spring for wild flowers! I'm looking forward to it! I hope you are!

### HONORS COMMITTEE REPORT, 1995

*This Honoree joined the Western Carolina Botanical Club with a special interest in flowering plants but also with many other interests. Moving to North Carolina proved to be a good idea, fueling a love for the world of nature as well as learning about nature in this new area. Many other interests also occupied the time of this quiet but intense individual.*

*In 1985 this member joined a team in Holmes Educational State Forest collecting data along the principal trails of the species and numbers of plants in bloom each week from earliest spring through late autumn. For two additional seasons other trails were studied and an impressive amount of seasonal data on plant blooming periods was accumulated. This person introduced a small battery operated tape recorder for recording plant names and significant field notes. Our honoree owned a computer and could compile lists and preserve them easily.*

*Thus our friend learned more and more flowers and prepared more and more lists which she generously shared. Serving as the WCBC Recorder, lists of plants were supplied to the Program Committee which enabled wiser scheduling of trips for maximum variety and numbers of flowers. Meanwhile knowledge and proficiency in identification increased throughout the Club.*

The person whom we honor set aside one day each week to concentrate on studying special habitats. During a period of ten years observations were made at five different sites. This person's efforts were important in the development of Jackson Park Wetlands and the Mud Creek Wetlands and their being placed on the North Carolina Registry of Natural Areas. At the Carl Sandburg National Historic Monument a list was compiled of the flora along the Big Glassy Trail.

This conservationist is deeply involved in the recently organized Natural Heritage Trust of Henderson County and exemplifies how one's association with the Western Carolina Botanical Club not only enriches ones life but also has a ripple effect, stimulating others to use their talents and efforts toward conserving natural areas.

We could go on and tell of other facets of her life and service but by now you must recognize that this Honoree is Anne Ulinski.

We take great pleasure in awarding you **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** in the Western Carolina Botanical Club. to **ANNE ULINSKI** .

This Honoree joined the Western Carolina Botanical Club a long time ago---I don't have the date. Soon after meeting this individual I recognized a person who had a gift for seeing the obscure flower, bird or mammal and attaching a name to it---sometimes a descriptive name used by the local people. Such a love for nature often starts in childhood, in this case taught by a loving father.

The family lived for many years in a beautiful woodland area that our club knows very well. Here in April and May spring flowers are outstanding every year--violets and spring beauties, trilliums and trout lilies, and many, many more.

After high school graduation in 1948 this person moved out into the world and worked for a sister who was a CPA in Washington, DC. Our honoree returned home to North Carolina in 1956 when the father died, to reside with the mother for the next ten years. Upon leaving Washington, a job transfer to the US Air Force Weather Service in Asheville was arranged and employment continued until retirement in the late 1970's.

Our friend moved to a house she built beside a mountain stream. Gradually gardens were added. Now a veritable menagerie shares the property---dogs and cats, rabbits, chickens, ducks, "banty" chickens, and guinea fowl. The wild flowers and rugged trails are special.

This self-taught botanist has led many trips on her property and near-by Pearson's Falls as well as many other locations. Whatever hike she attends she is busy helping others learn more. By now you must recognize that this Honoree is Millie Pearson.

Your knowledge of and closeness to nature have grown through the years, Millie. We insist that whenever you are present a field trip is enriched.

We take great pleasure in awarding **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** in the Western Carolina Botanical Club to **MILLIE PEARSON**.

SNOWBIRD MOUNTAIN LODGE, APRIL 23-25, Tues. - Thurs.

MAKE RESERVATIONS SOON : ACCOMODATIONS ARE LIMITED.

Several beautiful trails in the area vary from easy to strenuous. We should see upwards of 50 species of wildflowers blooming. Games, reading and relaxation are available in the Lodge. Evening programs. Drive (round trip) 200+ miles. Make your reservations and deposit directly with Snowbird Mountain Lodge, 275 Santeetlah Road, Robbinsville, NC. (709) 479-3433. Make your travel plans to arrive by 10:00-10:30 a.m. of the first day and carry a lunch for that day.

"SOME THOUGHTS".....Bill Verduin

So you have heard this silly story going around about trees talking to each other -- but you don't really believe a word of it. Perhaps that is because they speak a foreign language. But when trees are attacked by a batch of leaf eating caterpillars, they not only activate their own defenses but they ALSO notify their neighbors that there is danger lurking in the neighborhood. Read this interesting excerpt taken from Pastorale by Jake Page.

"Some Dartmouth biologists raised poplar and sugar maple seedlings under controlled conditions in the laboratory. Then they tore the leaves of some of the seedlings, a trauma similar to that inflicted by leaf-nibbling pests. The damaged trees promptly produced large quantities of phenols, chemicals that, like tanins, foul up digestive enzymes of insect pests. The poplar seedlings more than doubled the normal level of phenols in fifty-two hours -- not at all surprising. But the undamaged poplars that were not in contact with their afflicted brethren by either root or leaf raised their phenol content by more than fifty percent in the same time period! Whatever the signal is, and it is suspected to be a hormone called ethylene, it must be borne in the air. Ethylene is produced by damaged plant tissues and seems to play a role in the synthesis of phenols -- perhaps the vegetable world's Paul Revere".

Do you suppose that when trees hear the Botanical Club coming down the trail they . . . ., no they wouldn't say that -- but what would they say??

*Upon this herbless rock a small gray lichen  
Did fix her home. She came with meek intent,  
To bless her stern and sterile place of rest:  
And presently her gentle sisters followed,  
Some vested white, and some in robes of brown,  
And some in yellow vestures, laboring all  
At the same work, with tiny cups held out  
To catch the raindrops, and with mattocks small  
To pierce the rock. And well did they effect  
Their destined purpose.*

Unknown

**A NOTE FROM SOUTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA.....TOM and BARBARA HALLOWELL**

Frozen lawn, bare limbs, and an icy puddle reveal the season--mid-winter--but sun beams through the glass of our enclosed, "unheated" patio. We sit comfortably in sweaters. Good ol' solar heating! Immediately outside grows a clump of young sassafras, planted on our lawn last spring. Did you ever try to find sassafras in a nursery? It's like trying to find a potted dandelion! "Weed tree" they said, nursery after nursery. But I did find one that has charmed us and the neighbors with brilliant fall color.

Between us and a neighboring patio stands an old dogwood, loved and handsome in all seasons but doomed by blight. Beyond it is a clump of river birch (a sentimental tie to our yard in Hendersonville) and a sturdy young red maple. Not a mountain scene but we enjoy it!

Uphill a bit a 25 year old silverbell shows fine twigs against today's blue. In spring it turned white with tiny bells, another touch of the mountains, and in autumn I piled leaves from it onto my ferns. We moved 30 species of native ferns from our Hendersonville garden. Mostly propagated from spores, they are "my babies" and have accepted and settled into their new home as we have.

The trees provide perches for birds feasting on winter feeders--lots of juncos and white throats, regular chickadees, titmice, and nuthatches, downy and red-bellied woodpeckers, brazen crows and bright cardinals, jays, and finches--the usual feeder gang. We enjoy their comings and goings to feeders at apartments either side of us so don't have to feed them ourselves. Economical!

A couple hundred feet from us is a mature beech woods with trails leading to a stream, to an oak-hickory-maple woods and to fields. Unfortunately deer over population is causing many problems.

We continue to give slide programs on nature and adventure travel subjects. I had the pleasure of giving two at adjacent Longwood Gardens and a fern program/workshop/walk for guides at Mount Cuba, an extensive and magnificent woodland garden of native Piedmont flora. Visits now are only by appointment. It eventually will be opened to the general public and it is superb!

So, WCBC friends, the Hallowells continue blessed with outdoor pursuits and the good health to enjoy them. Note: our address has changed from 207 Kendal at Longwood to 207 Kendal Drive, Kennett Square, PA 19248. Proximity to Longwood Gardens confused too many. Have fun botanizing in '96!

We watched a volunteer plant grow along our driveway with pleasure. It was Croton punctatus (Euphorbiaceae), an annual to short-lived perennial that is found along the coast of the Carolinas. November frost killed the plant before its seeds matured. This and the Christmas season bring to mind the spurge family (Euphorbiaceae). The family is large, diverse and has a typical tripartite capsule opening ventrally to release the seeds. Many species have a milky or colored juice (latex). The family has about 300 genera and 7500 species world-wide, except for the Arctic.

Euphorbia, a cosmopolitan genus, has about 1,500 species, making it the second largest angiosperm genus. They range from roadside weeds to wildflowers of our deciduous forests to the African species that are spiny and nearly leafless and ecologically comparable to the New World Cactaceae (Cactus Family). To separate the cactus-like euphorbias from true cacti, note that euphorbias have colored juice and paired spines. Some important members of the family are para rubber (Hevea brasiliensis), castor-oil (Ricinus communis), and manihot (Manihot esculentus) a staple food of the tropics.

The poinsettia (Euphorbia pulcherrima) has become extremely popular for Christmas decoration. Actually, the flowers of the plant are small and typical of the Euphorbiaceae. Large brilliant red bracts surround the flowers and function to attract pollinators to the flowers. Now horticulturists have developed a variety of colors and forms of poinsettias for the Christmas trade.

Other euphorbias include snow-on-the-mountain, (Euphorbia marginata) flowering spurge (E. corollata), Carolina ipecacac (E. ipecacuanhae), and crown-of-thorns (E. bojeri). Here in the mountains our weedy euphorbias in the subgenus Chamaesyce are best identified using Wofford's GUIDE rather than Radford's MANUAL.

Sorry to note that the ancient mountain maple (Acer spicatum) at the Brevard McDonald's has died and been removed. It would be nice to learn about the history of this tree and the history of Brevard that swirled around it.

I believe that I saw a Gentiana quinquefolia (Gentianaceae), along one of the trails at the Cradle of Forestry. I saved two maypops plants (Passiflora incarnata (Passifloraceae) when the main road for the Meadows was graded. I rescued the plants and replanted them in a safe place. This makes 25 species that I have moved to safety.

# LOOK AGAIN !

Of all the spectacular displays of spring wildflowers in the southern mountains, perhaps none is as breathtaking as the immense snow-white carpet laid down on the woodland floor by masses of White Fringed Phacelia.

This sprawling little plant--Phacelia fimbriata to botanists-- achieves the effect with countless delicate campanulate flowers that are only one-half inch across. Up close the name becomes apparent, for the corolla lobes are finely but conspicuously fringed.



PHACELIA DUBIA

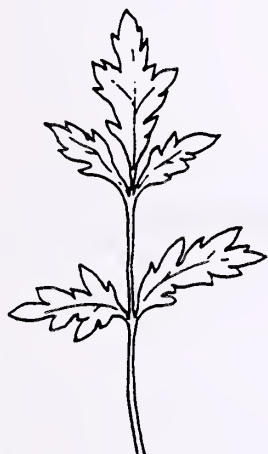


P. FIMBRIATA



Another fringed species, rarer in these mountains but with a wider overall range, is P. purshii, popularly known as Miami Mist. Its flowers are pale blue to almost white; in case of doubt, a diagnostic clue can be found in the hairs of the inflorescence and stems, which are short and incurved rather than spreading as in P. fimbriata.

Also light blue, but with unfringed corollas, is Small-flowered Phacelia (P. dubia). It too has a habit of bursting into bloom over extensive areas.



P. BIPINNATIFIDA

Our last species, Fern-leaved Phacelia (P. bipinnatifida), differs from the others in a number of ways: Its flowers are larger and flatter, with violet-blue unfringed corollas, and each lobe has a pair of narrow appendages near the base; the pubescence in the inflorescence is glandular; the segments of the larger leaves are pinnately divided into coarsely toothed segments; and the upper as well as the lower leaves are stalked.

*Dick Smith*

S H O R T I A

Vol. XVIII, No. 1

SPRING 1996

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

Editors: Elton J & Aline Hansens

Distribution: Ruth Hoerich

Please submit articles, letters, notes, etc. for the next issue by May 10, 1996 to Aline Hansens, 125 Far Horizons Lane, Asheville, Nc 28803. (704) 277-7486.

REMINDER: 1996 CLUB DUES OF \$8.00 are welcomed by the treasurer, Elaine Montgomery, 1636 O'Hara Cir., H'ville, NC 28739.

SHORTIA

c/o Ruth Hoerich  
215 Newport Road  
Hendersonville, NC 28739

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# SHORTIA

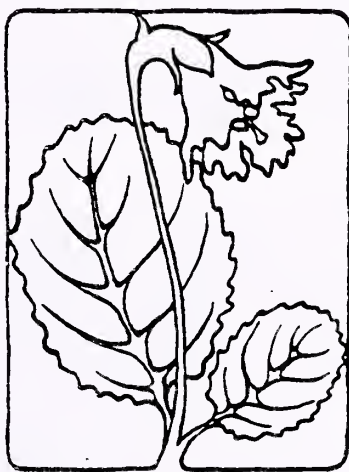
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FROM THE PRESIDENT.....DON HERRMAN

Your sympathy and thoughtfulness will always be gratefully remembered and deeply appreciated.

This pretty well sums it up. Katherine's passing was very sudden and completely unexpected. The emergency services and the hospitals responded immediately and did all they could. The damage from the stroke was too massive. She passed away at 6:10 a.m., Friday, March 8.

Your condolences and acts of kindness to me and my family have been a big help all through this trying experience, so again let me say thank you from all of us. Don Herrman.

The Program-Schedule for July 1996-January 1997 is being developed and we anticipate mailing it to members in late May to early June so you can plan ahead for summer and fall. The Committee met and a suitable schedule of hikes and meetings is in the works. The problem is always to arrange a sequence which will be of broad interest and botanically challenging. That is half of the story. The other half is to get commitments from club members to lead and record. We try to find a leader and co-leader plus a recorder for each trip. Your help is solicited. Our aim as a club is to enjoy nature and to increase our knowledge. We need more leaders. Come, lead and learn.

We need your help!!

COMFORT ON THE TRAIL on a botany trip depends on our actions and attitudes toward the pests that confound us. Fortunately, we usually hike in mountain areas which present few pest problems,---black flies in spring where rapidly running streams exist, sometimes mosquitoes, and occasionally ticks (though we rarely see them until we return home and find them on our person). Now and then other blood-sucking flies annoy us. Few people know that we can avoid much insect annoyance simply by wearing white or yellow clothing and avoiding navy blue, dark reds and black. Bees and wasps will visit us more often if we dress like a flower or improve ourselves by smelling like a rose. Be aware of your color and aroma.

The use of insect repellents will help keep many pests away. I find I rarely need a repellent on our trips. I keep a bottle in the car and use it infrequently. My preference is to suffer a little rather than use a repellent. EJJH

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU.....ALINE HANSENS

**Morgan, Shirley** Rt. 2, Box 56A. Horseshoe, N. C. 28742. (704) 891-4544. Shirley, a nurse, is a native of this area. Her interest in nature and Millie Blaha's course on Wild Flowers led her to join the WCBC.



**Normile, Margaret** 60 Brucemont Circle, Asheville, N. C. 28806. With an interest in plants, Margaret learned of the WCBC from member, Al Dupree.

**Toth, Barbara,** P.O. Box 9000, WWC Box 5010, Asheville, N.C. 28815. (704) 299-3473. Barbara, a plant ecologist, received her training at Oregon State and moved to Asheville with her family last July. Her husband teaches Biology at Warren Wilson College and recently they co-taught a course in plant taxonomy. Barbara's interest in learning the plants of this area led her to join WCBC.

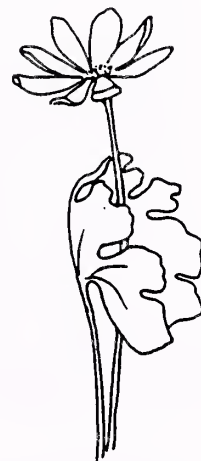
**Whitlock, Barbara** 110 Pressley Ave., Brevard, N.C. 28712. 883-9313. Originally from Georgia, Barbara and her husband have lived 39 years in Brevard. Enjoyment of flowers and gardening led to an interest in wild flowers and encouraged by friend, Shirley Morgan, she joined the WCBC.



### A REMINDER TO ALL LEADERS AND RECORDERS

If you are unable to fulfill your obligation, it is your responsibility to find a substitute and to inform the remaining leader of this substitution. Also the first-named leader should include the co-leader and the recorder on his/her scouting trip, if at all possible. Erika Parmi.

**JOYCE KILMER MEMORIAL FOREST** is a great place to see flowers in spring and Snowbird Lodge offers a superior place to stay while exploring the whole area. Rise early and see sunrise from "The Point"; rock on the porch and enjoy the sunset. Will I ever remember the differences between all of those trilliums? EJH



SNOWBIRD MOUNTAIN LODGE...April 23-25, 1996  
Random thoughts of the Participants.

After our long, cold winter with its snow, sleet and rain, the trip to Snowbird was a truly rewarding experience! Suddenly it was the spring we have been waiting for--the beautiful yellow greens of the newly opening leaves, an abundance of wild flowers and even a flock of evening grosbeaks at the Lodge feeders.

Did the initial cheerful slogging through the rain at Joyce Kilmer set the tone for this year's Snowbird experience? In any event, what followed was a memorably happy blend of good fellowship and relaxed sharing and learning from plant life abundance, the setting inspiring, the facilities most agreeable.

Back for the second or third time to this newly renovated lodge...a pleasant relaxing time. Our friendly, easy-going cooperative group enjoying whatever the "powers that be" had planned for us--rain or shine! A super large corner room plus more than ample meals. Who could ask for more!!

I feel so blessed being able to stay at such a beautiful place. I saw my first evening grosbeak. Thanks for arranging the trip.

Many thanks for a wonderful botany experience at the Snowbird Mountain Lodge area. The flowers were spectacular, wonderful food, and great fellowship.

To truly experience SPRING, one must spend a few days at Snowbird Mountain. It is thrilling to see hillsides of Trillium grandiflorum, the "arrangements" of blue phlox and phacelia, the exquisiteness of individual flowers. I am glad I made the acquaintance of Uvularia perfoliata with its soft orange stripe.

An exhilarating experience in a rustic setting. It was a joy to watch the sunrise over the mountains. The bird feeders were a big attraction to the birds and the birders.

The Snowbird spring wildflower retreat led us to these thoughts---"The serenity we felt looking out over those mountains; the beauty in recurring spring after such a harsh winter; the privilege of personal renewal among "botanical" people whose focus is characteristically outside themselves; and the discerning leadership which adjusted the program as it unfolded and led to such beautiful locations."

My guest was impressed, not only with the variety of spring flowers, but with the hospitality and friendliness of the Botanical Club members. The many birds at the new feeders at the Lodge almost made as colorful a display as the flowers.

From Actaea pachypoda to Xanthorrhiza simplicissima (no Zizia) we saw an impressive variety of flowering plants on the trip to Snowbird. Encore, encore!

## THE UNIVERSITY BOTANICAL GARDENS AT ASHEVILLE.....LOWELL ORBISON

The concept of a garden of native plants in Asheville arose principally from the enthusiasm of Bruce and Tom Shinn. The concept was to collect, preserve and display native plants and to educate the public about the beauties of the native flora of the southern Appalachian Mountains. The Shinns, with like-minded members of the community, the editor of the Citizen Times and the Asheville Garden Club convinced the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina at Asheville to set aside 10+ acres of the land recently acquired for the University; this land to be developed as a botanical garden by the University Botanical Gardens of Asheville Inc., a newly formed group of volunteers.

The property was made available in 1960. There followed intense activity for much of the land had grown up in briars and brush which had to be removed before any planting could begin. Doan Ogden, a local landscape architect, prepared a beautiful design for the gardens which has been the basis for the subsequent development. A service road was soon constructed and the principal walkway through the gardens (the Creighton Trail) with its impressive stone wall was built.

In subsequent years many structures were built to exemplify buildings typical of the mountain culture, to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Gardens and to provide shelter for maintenance equipment. These included a cabin, a springhouse, bridges, a gazebo, a garden for the blind and most recently a visitor's center with meeting room, library, office, solarium and a gift shop.

During these same years, native plants were collected, donated and purchased to be planted in the Gardens. These plantings were made in as typical natural settings as possible to attain the goal of "natural gardens". This activity continues today, for the Gardens are continually changing. Some plants grow invasively and need to be controlled, others disappear and need to be replaced and there is a constant effort to add to the collection to make it more nearly a comprehensive representation of the flora of the region. Thus there is always need for volunteers to keep the Gardens a dynamic place for the enjoyment and education of the public.

Today the Gardens contain about 800 species not including the mosses, grasses, sedges and rushes, some of which are present in the Gardens. There are many features that are appealing to the casual visitor, to the lover of nature and to the professional botanist. The sunny meadows, sheltered cove, sparkling streams with their bridges and quiet pools and the shady walks under magnificent trees all contribute to this appeal.

Yet the *raison d'être* for all this beauty is to concentrate typical native plants in a small area. Species that might

require miles of hiking and/or driving to be viewed in the wild are found here within a few feet or yards of each other so that they can be easily enjoyed and studied. Just to illustrate the possibilities, a relatively small number of the plants in the Gardens have been selected and are presented here. They are Oconee Bells, Galax, Golden Club, Marsh Marigold, Pickering's Weeds, Water Shield, Water Lily, Swamp Pink, Shooting Stars, many species of Ferns, several species of Trillium and of Magnolias, Witch Alder (*Fothergilla*), Green Dragon, Skunk Cabbage, several species of Wild Roses, several Evergreen Gingers, Twinleaf, Celandine Poppy, Dwarf Larkspur, Golden Seal, several species of Bellworts, Yellow and Pink Lady Slippers, Water Cress, Forget-me-not, Large Whorled Pogonia, several species of Pitcher Plants, Swamp Rose Mallow, Turtle Heads, Lobelias and Gentians.

The Gardens were created and are maintained entirely by volunteers. Its income is derived entirely from plant and gift sales and from memberships, donations and legacies. Under these circumstances help is needed in all of these categories. Under these circumstances, too, there is great satisfaction in playing a part in the maintenance and enhancement of this botanical gem.

#### RECORDER'S REPORT, FEBRUARY THROUGH APRIL 1996. ERIKA S. PARMER

As a prognosticator I get a passing grade only! My prediction in the last SHORTIA for a great spring for wild flowers was fine, except in general on Botanical Club field trip days the flowers were not yet in bloom, or the hike was cancelled.

Pearson's Falls on March 22 was cancelled due to storm damage and Table Rock (only the leaders turned out) on April 1, Jones Gap on April 26 and Tanbark Tunnel on May 6 were cancelled due to rain.

The two trips south to the Pacolet River, however, were a treat with masses of trillium (white and red Trillium erectum, T. cuneatum, T. grandiflorum, and T. cernuum). Most of the other early March and April trips yielded only a fraction of the numbers of species we usually see in bloom. Even the reliable Oconee Station Falls trip was not up to par. Due to the late spring we were lucky on the Holmes Educational State Forest trip where we saw masses of the early blooming trout lily (Erythronium americanum), bloodroot (Sanguinaria canadensis), and spring beauty (Claytonia caroliniana). The plants along the Givens Estates trails also seemed to be waiting for warmer weather.

By the end of April the plants were catching up and we had nice displays on the Snowbird trip. Now as I write this on May 6, the trees have leafed out almost completely and the rain showers and warmth of the season finally have arrived after a long, cold winter and spring.

# FOREST TREES.....ALINE HANSENS

Liquidambar styrachiflua, better known as SWEET GUM, is a member of the witch hazel family, Hamamelidaceae, which also includes Fothergilla, (witch alder). The term liquidus means fluid and the arabic ambar alludes to the fragrant juice or resin which exudes from the tree when cut. Hardened clumps of this resin are chewed by some people and commercially it is used in the preparation of chewing gum.

Sweet gum is found throughout North Carolina in the coastal plain, piedmont and mountains up to 2500 feet. It prefers moist, rich areas usually in the neighborhood of red maple and black gum. This tall and beautiful pyramidal tree grows to an average height of 75' but has been known to reach 150' with a diameter of 4 to 5'.

Its distinctive star-shaped leaves are palmate with 5 to 7 pointed lobes and are fragrant when crushed. In the fall the foliage turns a deep crimson making this tree a handsome and popular ornamental.

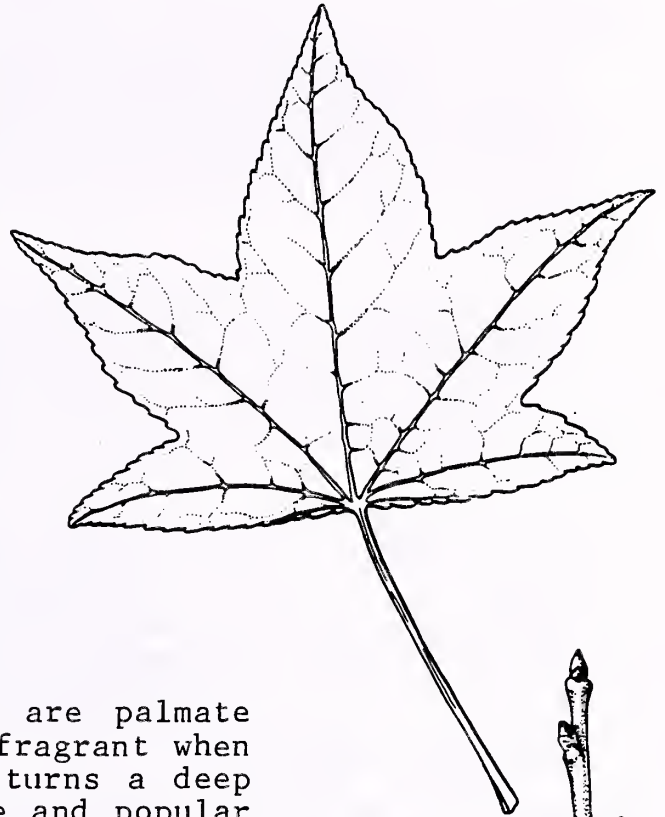
By late March, but usually in April after the leaves come out, clusters of small greenish flowers appear. The long spikes or racemes of the staminate and the spherical heads of the pistillate flowers occur separately on the same tree and are not too visible among the leaves.

The fruit is a spiny pendulous ball made up of many woody, beaked capsules containing tiny winged seeds. These balls are prized for craft work but are an annoyance to gardeners who object to the litter.

In the winter some trees are easily recognized by the corky wings or ridges on the branches. The pendulous fruit often persists into the winter.

The fine grained wood of the sweet gum makes it a valuable timber tree. Veneer from the tree takes a high polish and is widely used for furniture. When stained the wood resembles expensive hardwood and is used in interiors and all kinds of wooden ware.

## SWEET GUM



I am preparing this column during the first week of March and the seed catalogues are upon me, but two books are on my mind. My friend Charles Nelson (until now of Dublin, Ireland) and Wendy Walsh (illustrator) have issued **Flowers of Mayo**, a book that you would covet. Only 150 copies were published in 1995, and they now sell for \$715 US. This is a beautifully crafted book whose value can only go up, especially because of its art work. And now to a more accessible book: Ray Desmond's **Kew: the History of the Royal Botanic Gardens**. This book reflects the rich botanical history of the greatest herbarium/botanical in the world. Read about how that autocrat W.T. Thiselton-Dyer treated Beatrix Potter. The book is well illustrated and is THE definitive history.

I hope that anyone interested in plants will have an opportunity to visit Kew (just outside London on the Thames River) and walk through their gardens, remembering Wakehurst is also part of Kew. I for one spent most of the time in the glorious herbarium with its red spiral wrought-iron stairs that took me to the herbarium cases.

But we are in Brevard and watching spring unfold. Buds are swelling, bulbs are blooming, and some plants are greening. I am pleased with our witch-hazel which came into full bloom in mid-February. This shrub is one of the first that I planted: the red-flowered Hamamelis X intermedia 'Dianne'. Later in the season it will be joined by our Fothergilla gardenii (which came from Fry's Nursery) and Betty's joy, a Liquidambar styraciflua tree from Lowe's.

This introduces my featured family, the witch-hazel family (Hamamelidaceae). The three aforementioned plants are members of this family, the latter two being natives of North Carolina. The family, composed of trees and shrubs, has 30 genera (13 monotypic) and about 90 species, widespread in both the Old and New World, in the subtropics and warm-temperate regions. The witch-hazel family is loosely knit, with many isolated genera. The witch-hazel is the last (end of the year) or first (beginning of the year) to bloom. The genus is represented by Hamamelis virginiana in our area, and I would like to obtain a plant for our gravel path. This would give me three of the four native species of North Carolina: The other being Fothergilla major.

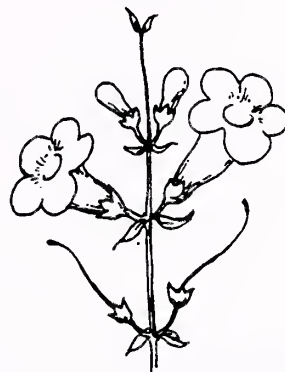
A related family, Platanaceae, has one genus Platanus with 6 to 7 species from the eastern Mediterranean region to Himalaya Mountains and from Canada to Mexico. I planted a sycamore (P. occidentalis) which I bought from WalMart for \$2.00 at the end of the season. Most believe that these two families are related, but neither can be derived from the other. The flowers of Platanus are more primitive, but the wood is more advanced, than the witch-hazel family.

# LOOK AGAIN !

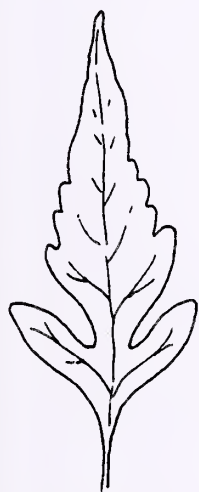
Although some of our regional guide books describe both yellow- and pink-flowered plants as belonging to the genus Gerardia, it makes things easier if we follow the more recent taxonomic treatment that places both groups in other genera--namely, Aureolaria and Agalinis, respectively. It is the former, all known as False Foxgloves, that we are considering here.

The first three species are erect perennials, sparingly branched if at all, bearing  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " slightly irregular campanulate flowers with five spreading lobes, in terminal racemes. The upper leaves are small and for the most part entire; the principal lower ones, which afford the best means of distinguishing species, can at the same time be annoyingly variable.

Downy False Foxglove (A. virginica) has a soft, grayish pubescence. Its leaves have a few large lobes below the middle and smaller ones above, all blunt. Smooth False Foxglove (A. laevigata) has a smooth, shiny green stem, and the main leaves are entire or at most have a few shallow lobes or teeth. Yellow False Foxglove (A. flava) also is smooth-stemmed but it is glaucous and purplish. The leaves are pinnately lobed or cleft into pointed segments. Its pedicels differ from those of the other two species in being longer than  $\frac{1}{4}$ " and curved rather than straight.



AUREOLARIA FLAVA



A. VIRGINICA



A. LAEVIGATA



A. FLAVA

Our other representative is Fern-leaved False Foxglove (A. pedicularis). This is a much-branched annual with axillary flowers, and is instantly recognizable by its sticky glandular hairs. The leaves are smaller and once- or twice-pinnate with irregularly toothed margins.

*Dick Smith*

S H O R T I A

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Editors: Elton J & Aline Hansens

Distribution: Ruth Hoerich

Please submit articles, letters, notes, etc. for the next issue by August 10 to Aline Hansens, 125 Far Horizons Lane, Asheville, NC 28803. (704) 277-7486.

**SHORTIA**

c/o Ruth Hoerich  
215 Newport Road  
Hendersonville, NC 28739

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# SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

AUTUMN 1996

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ELTON and ALINE HANSENS  
Editors

## WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

President:	Don Herrman	Treasurer:	Elaine Montgomery
Vice President:	Dean Crawford	Recorder:	Erika Parmi
Secretary:	Laverne Pearson	Historian:	Louise Foresman

FROM THE PRESIDENT.....DON HERRMAN

Summer is here!! When I was tubing down the road this winter enjoying the snow, I wondered if the meadow would ever recover. It has in abundance. Even the encroaching moss has yielded to the spring beauties and other weeds and wild flowers. I won't use the mower until fall.

By fall we will be having another meeting of the Scheduling Committee. If you have any ideas for next year let your club officers know. Your participation is always welcome.

Now this is especially true where SHORTIA is concerned. It is apparent that only a few members are contributing articles and letters to our publication. Remember it is Shortia that helps bind us together.

It is going to be much more interesting for our Editors and readers when more members SHARE their experiences--all of us travel, read and botanize in our own surroundings. Why not share our findings with the rest of the Club. Shortia is the way to do this. Contact our Editors and let them know what you are doing.

Although our Annual Meeting is a few months away, another Nominating Committee has been appointed. Don Bender, Lois McDaniel, and Erika Parmi have graciously consented to take on this task.

As the summer winds down and I await what is going to happen in the meadow I am struck by the many ways we can contribute to WCBC, especially through Shortia.



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU.....ALINE HANSENS

**Forshaw, Yvette** 47 Lake Dr., K6, Hendersonville, NC 28739. (704) 692-8022. Yvette, a retired army and V. A. nurse, has lived almost 50 years in the Asheville area. Loves plants and flowers; learned of the WCBC from member Ruth Hoerich.



**Greer, Frederick & Jeanne** 205 Stonebrook Dr., Hendersonville, NC 28791. (704) 697-1406.

**Jaffe, Bernard & Gloria** Route 1, Box 74. Zirconia, NC 28790. (Temporary address until move to Flat Rock).

**Sirchia, Vincent & Jean** 14 Lakewood Rd., Hendersonville, NC 28792.

## MEMBER NEWS.....ANNE ULINSKI

In May of this year, Millie Blaha and I signed a contract with The Nature Conservancy's Southeast Regional Office to do a two-year study at the Carl Sandburg National Historic Site. Our assignment is to inventory the vascular flora and collect herbarium specimens for each species found in the park during all growing seasons over the two-year period. We will also be helping with the mapping of the plant communities, preparing the herbarium specimens in accordance with National Park Service guidelines and assisting with the recording of the data into the Automated National Catalog System. This project stems from a partnership arrangement between The Nature Conservancy and the National Park Service

So far Millie and I have collected over 150 plant specimens. It's a real departure for us because we are required to dig up specimens so that the root structure is also available for study. It's a wonderful project and we are having lots of fun.

I'm also spending considerable time with the land trust we organized in Henderson County. I believe we'll be successful in saving some land from the chip mills and developers. I like to think of plants and animals surviving under our watchful eyes!

## A BOOK FOR THE AVID BOTANIST.....ELTON J. HANSENS

We have recently purchased **GUIDE TO THE FLOWERING PLANTS** by Wendy B. Zomlefer, a highly technical and beautifully illustrated book published by University of North Carolina Press. The 158 original pen and ink plates depict intricate dissections of 312 species in 130 temperate to tropical families. I could spend hours studying the detailed drawings. Aline, being a scientific illustrator herself, truly appreciates the magnitude of the work and its excellence. This is not a field manual but is a valuable tool for classroom and laboratory.

RECORDER'S REPORT FOR MAY THROUGH JULY 1996.....ERIKA S. PARM

During this period all trips were held except the May 6 trip to Tanbark Tunnel which was cancelled because of rain. The Laurel River trip on May 3 was noteworthy for the abundance of early saxifrage (Saxifraga virginensis) and a patch of liverworts on the wet rock walls. Seven species of violets were seen.

The May 10 trip to the Coleman Boundry Road was held on a beautiful spring day. This road always has a great variety of species. A short walk on an old forest road to Corner Rock (a large overhanging rock above a small creek) produced one-flowered cancer root (Orobanche uniflora), showy orchis (Galearis spectabilis) and a special treat - a wild hen turkey (Meleagris gallopavo)! Along the road yellow coltsfoot (Tussilago farfara), which we seldom see, was in bloom.

The cold day on Buck Springs Nature Trail on May 13 surprised everyone with a few snow flurries. In spite of this many flowers were out with an abundance of painted trillium (Trillium undulatum) including one with 5 petals rather than the typical six.

Whiteside Mountain on May 20 presented us with a spectacular display of Catesby's trillium (T. catesbaei) along the cliffside trail. The sand myrtle (Leiophyllum buxifolium) was in full bloom. On our fall foliage trips to the mountain we usually see only a few late blossoms of the myrtle. The lunch hour conversation was enlivened by students on a geology/natural history field trip from the University of Oklahoma.

The drive to Bearpen Gap on May 24 was a beautiful one with pink shell azaleas (Rhododendron vaseyi) in full bloom along the Parkway. On the trail itself there was an abundance of hawthorne, toothwort and bluets with more than forty other wildflowers in bloom.

The Horse Cove trip on May 27 and the Heintooga trip on June 7 produced few flowers. The Horse Cove trip was held much later than usual and the Heintooga trip was earlier in the month.

June 14 at Craggy Gardens was a little early for the Catawba rhododendron (R. catawbiense) to be in full bloom, but the abundance of the white three-toothed cinquefoil (Potentilla tridentata) made up for that.

The picnic on June 21 at Don Herrman's was an unqualified success with good weather, camaraderie, delicious food and interesting plants. Of special note were the orchids - green adder's mouth (Malaxis unifolia) with its one green leaf and tiny green flowers only seen well with a hand lens; a group of colorful rosebud orchids (Cleistes divaricata) and the common downy rattlesnake plantain (Goodyeara pubescens). Don has an amazing variety of flowering plants, both common and unusual, on his acreage. Also seen was lizard's tail (Saururus cernuus). Its drooping raceme of white flowers is normally found in the piedmont and coastal plain of the Carolinas. Another interesting plant was the silverberry or autumn olive (Eleagnus umbellata), a shrub (not in bloom) whose fruit is enjoyed in the fall by birds. It gets its name from the silvery undersides of its leaves.

## RECORDER'S REPORT p. 2.

On June 28 many flowering plants were seen at Grassy Ridge Mine Overlook in spite of competition from trucks and workers repaving a section of the Parkway. A line of single traffic prevented the group from going to other overlooks we usually visit.

July 12 at Butter Gap turned up another orchid. It was in fruit at the time and remained unidentified. Dick Smith did some intensive research and identified it as the rare Loesel's twayblade (Liparis loeselii), another orchid with tiny greenish-yellow flowers.

The meadow at Haywood Gap on July 19 again was covered with a spectacular display of fly poison (Amianthemum muscaetoxicum) along with a few blossoming plants of bunchflower (Melanthium virginicum) which we seldom see. The month's field trips ended on July 26 on the Shut-In Trail where we saw more than 40 species in bloom. We especially enjoyed the small-flowered false hellebore (Veratrum parviflorum). This was a good year for the species. They have been seen abundantly on other trails. The turk's cap lily (Lilium superbum) also was especially abundant.

Because I was away for most of these trips I am indebted to all the individual recorders who sent in plant lists and such good trip descriptions.

## SAVING THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Preserver's of the Blue Ridge Parkway hopes to raise \$250,000 this calendar year to purchase selected land. The pastoral character of the Blue Ridge Parkway is under increasing pressure from development in its scenic corridor. Every penny raised will be used to purchase essential rights of way. Members of the WCBC are invited to participate. To become a parkway preserver send your contribution to "Preserver of the Blue Ridge Parkway, c/o The Conservation Trust of North Carolina, P.O. Box 33333, Raleigh, NC, 27636."

## My UN-FAVORITE Plants

poison ivy	devil's walking stick	castor oil
blackberry with thorns	nettles	
skunk cabbage	stick-tights	sneeze-weed

How about yours ??

We are all guilty of falling pray to the "mañana syndrome" when difficult tasks have to be done. On Wednesday, August 7, I had the perfect excuse for postponing my afternoon of writing the Recorder's Report for SHORTIA.

On that morning I returned from my weekly grocery shopping and left the car and basement doors wide open to facilitate carrying in my groceries. As I climbed the stairs to the main level with the first bag I saw a large black animal on the deck. It was a bear! As I reached the top of the stairs it reared up covering the entire panel of the deck door. Was it staring at me---hungrily?? It was a HUGE bear!

Since there is no easy exit from that deck---a closed in screened area at one end and a ten foot drop at the other--I was a little apprehensive thinking that the bear might crash through the deck door or the screened in area. I dropped my groceries on the kitchen counter and dialed 911. Then I ran downstairs to slam the car and basement doors, hoping that the bear would remain on the deck. The bear had twisted a heavy 6 foot metal rod into two almost 90° angles pulling it and the bird feeder to the floor of the deck. The bear had finished eating the sunflower seeds and started to walk to the open end of the deck. I followed inside by way of the hallway and heard a horrendous crash before I got to the open bedroom door and its glass door to the deck. When I got to the bedroom, I found that the bear apparently had leaped off the deck onto the woodshed below, crashing through the roof. The bear was nowhere in sight. I waited until my neighbor's two sons and the sheriff's deputies arrived before I ventured out to assess the damage.

The open lean-to shed is 18' long and 5' wide. The bear had broken through six of the nine corrugated roofing panels and had broken one 2 x 4 but, amazingly, had not tipped over the stacked firewood. After a late lunch, a visit from the regional wildlife officer, and calls to my insurance company and to neighbors, the afternoon was gone and no recorder's report had been written! Never a dull moment out here in the woods.!!



Our neighbor gave us some Louisiana-grown Amaryllis and ginger (Zingiber) plants, which I planted outside last fall. With the bad winter we had, I did not expect anything - but lo-and-behold one Amaryllis has had 8 blooms. The gingers are growing like bamboo. This is being written in June.

Up to now in these columns I have written about easily understood families. The Amaryllis brings to mind one of the most complicated family situations in the Spermatophyta. And like jumping off a cliff into ice cold water, I am going to tell you what happened to the now-defunked family Amaryllidaceae, and the battle over the parameter of the Liliaceae. Many of us were taught that members of the amaryllis family had an inferior ovary, and members of the lily family had a superior ovary. This separation has not stood the test of time, and the Amaryllidaceae, as a family, is generally not accepted in books written after the 1980's. So the Liliaceae has some 300 genera and nearly 4550 species. Most Americans recognize this one family: Liliaceae sensu latore, with some minor satellite families such as the Smilacaceae (Smilax) and Agavaceae (Agave). Some Australians, New Zealanders, and British recognize a myriad of segregate families, such as: but here is a problem. There are so many segregate families (up to 80) that there is no room to list them all. Clearly the last word has not been written.

Here in North Carolina these families may be recognized in the future: Alliaceae (onion), Asparagaceae (asparagus), Convallariaceae (lily-of-the-valley), Hemerocallidaceae (day-lily), Hyacinthaceae (hyacinth), Hypoxidaceae (yellow-eyed-grass), Trilliaceae (trillium), Uvulariaceae (bellwort), as well as the families listed above. I am pleased that I am no longer responsible for USDA/ARS scientific names of plants on a national and world basis.

Among the major genera in the Liliaceae are Allium, Amaryllis, Asparagus, Aspidistra, Convallaria, Funkia, Gloriosa, Hemerocallis, Hosta, Hyacinthus, Lilium, Medeola, Mucari, Narcissus, Ornithogalum, Scilla, Smilacina, Trillium, Tulipa, and Zephyranthes and my favorite North Carolina species, fly poison (Amianthium muscaetoxicum).

Two of the smallest satellite families of the Liliaceae are Petrosaviaceae (1 genus, 2 species) and Triuidaceae (7 genera, about 70 species). The former family is native from southern China to Borneo. The latter family is widespread in tropical and subtropical regions and seldom has been seen or collected.

## Charles Moore

The Book of Life was closed for Charles Moore, age 92, on June 18, 1996. It was a big book with many special chapters in it, many of which were focused on the world of nature. Some of the chapter highlights relating to nature are these:

- For 50 years, Charlie, as he was affectionately known, was employed by Duke Power and its predecessors. In his early working years Charlie traveled the roads of Transylvania County, collecting payment of bills in the days when even the main roads were dirt roads. When roads were to be widened or paved, and when new roads were built, before the bulldozers destroyed vegetation, Charlie rescued plants and brought them to his land. Before Lakes Keowee and Jocassee were dug and created, Charlie convinced Duke Power to let nature lovers "rescue" Shortia, also called Oconee bells, which was growing there. Those of us who have this Endangered plant growing in our woods and gardens can thank Charlie for making this possible.

- Students in Charlie's classes at Blue Ridge Community College not only were exposed to his botanical knowledge but also to his delightful sense of humor. Everyone now knows that "lady ferns wear purple panty hose".

- Charlie shared the wonders of nature's beauty on the 365 acres of his land (which he affectionately referred to as the "Farm") with nature lovers - individuals, garden clubs, and other groups. The Western Carolina Botanical Club always was warmly welcomed to this botanical wonderland with Kings Creek flowing through it.

- When distinguished botanists from all over the world came to Transylvania County, Charlie was contacted to be their guide to show them where the plants they were studying, photographing, or writing about were growing and blooming.

- Orchids pictured in Carlyle Luer's book "Native Orchids of the US and Canada, excluding Florida" which were photographed in Transylvania County were located for the author by Charlie Moore.

- When the range of the orchids in Fred Case's book "Orchids of the Western Great Lakes Region" extended into North Carolina, on orchid trails Case sought the field companionship with Charlie and his wife, Mary Lee.

- Duke Power's beautiful colored brochure "The Forest and Flowers of Keowee-Toxaway" contains excellent photographs of wild flowers made by Charlie and Dr. C. L. Rogers.

The legacy which Charlie left for those of us whose lives he touched and who were privileged to be called his friend cannot be measured in dollars and cents but rather in our having a richer life because of having been introduced to and having a greater appreciation for the world of nature because our paths crossed with his.

written by Millie Blaha

# LOOK AGAIN !

The individual florets that make up a composite "flower head" in plants of the Aster Family may be either tubular (as seen in the central yellow disk of a daisy, for instance) or strap-shaped (like those that form the daisy's white perimeter). Typically, the tubular corollas terminate in five lobes; these are often echoed in the strap-shaped florets in the form of vestigial teeth at the ends of the flattened corollas.

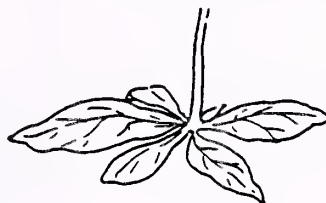
In the genus Elephantopus, known as Elephant's Foot, which bears only tubular flowers, we see an interesting variation in that the corollas are lop-sided--i. e., the lobes are all on one side, and since there are only a few florets in each head the radiating lobes combine to form a pattern that simulates a single, many-rayed flower.



Our most common species is E. carolinianus. It can be distinguished by its leaves, which are mostly cauline and are well developed. On the other hand, E. tomentosus--which is occasionally seen in our mountains but is much more common at lower elevations--has several large, flat basal leaves but few if any on the stem.



*E. CAROLINIANUS*



*E. TOMENTOSUS*

*Dick Smith*

S H O R T I A

VOL. XVIII, NO. 3

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# SHORTIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

WINTER 1996-97

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BOTANICAL GARDEN



ELTON and ALINE HANSENS  
Editors



## WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB

<b>President:</b>	Don Herrman	<b>Treasurer:</b>	Elaine Montgomery
<b>Vice President:</b>	Dean Crawford	<b>Recorder:</b>	Erika Parmi
<b>Secretary:</b>	Laverne Pearson	<b>Historian:</b>	Louise Foresman

**FROM THE PRESIDENT.....DON HERRMAN**

It is a beautiful fall day and I am sitting on the front porch overlooking the peaceful valley below. A steady breeze is beginning to strip leaves from the trees and it is still shirt sleeve weather. I can only hope this weather holds for our remaining hikes.

The Scheduling Committee has just met. Now, this is an informal committee, open to all members. Even though an attractive schedule is in the works, all of the members who met today agree that we need more input from the membership. All you need is to contact your club officers either on a hike, at a winter meeting or by phone.

Sitting on the porch, you realize what a beautiful area this is. One small committee does not know it all. So! lets hear from you.

On our recent hikes it was good to notice the number of walking sticks that were being put to good use. Not only is this a good safety measure, but is also very helpful in pointing out and identifying hard to see plants and flowers. Any "ole" solid stick will do---canes, trekking poles, or hand carved---a walking stick will add to the day.

As the seasons roll around, I have been watching my meadow and sure enough, the ladies' tresses bloomed on October 1. I don't know why I am always amazed by this, but I am. At the same time the red or purple-stemmed aster was in bloom. The longer I looked the more uncertain I became. Is the stem "reddish" or "purplish"? I am getting conflicting opinions. I would like to get your answer to this question in the next issue of SHORTIA.

Don't forget the **ANNUAL MEETING** of the **WESTERN CAROLINA BOTANICAL CLUB** Friday, January 17, 11:00 a.m. at the Parish House, St. John's Episcopal Church, Flat Rock. See the current WCBC Program Schedule for details.

Special guests at our Annual Meeting will be old-time members George and Opal Lemieux. George has earned a wide reputation as an expert nature photographer, and will exhibit some of his wildflower prints as a feature of the meeting.

**Miles Peele's 90th Birthday Party** was most enjoyable for all who attended. Miles is now living at Brian Center, P.O. Box 1096, Brevard, NC 28712, Phone: (704) 877-4234. David and Louise Peele thank all who were at the party and write: "he will continue to enjoy seeing you, talking to you on the telephone, or receiving notes or letters."



The flowers of Witch Hazel (Hamamelis virginiana) are borne in tight clusters, usually facing outward or downward. Clusters have 3 to 6 blooms. The four petals (yellow, orange, bronze. or reddish) are long and strap-shaped and unfold in a most unusual manner - similar to the uncoiling of fern fiddle-heads. It seems almost incredible that such delicate structures can withstand temperatures near zero degrees F. without damage, but they do this quite well coiling up on very cold days and uncoiling in milder weather.\*

The name "witch hazel" is of uncertain origin. It is probably derived from the word wych meaning "to bend" applied because the tough branches of the plants (witching rods) which supposedly bend toward underground water\*

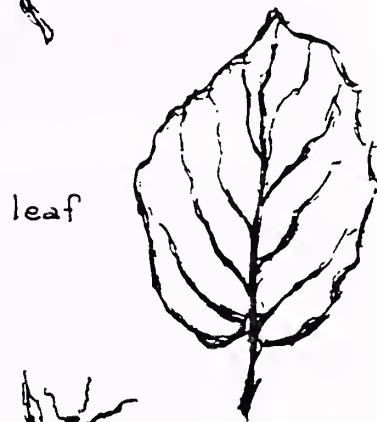
Witch hazel is of no value as a timber tree, and its use as an ornamental is limited; nevertheless this species is one of the most widely known southern trees because of its purported supernatural powers when in the hands of "water diviners". Not only is it claimed that the witch hazel fork has the ability to indicate the presence of water when in the hands of such fakirs, but in the past it has also been used by the unscrupulous in attempts to locate buried treasure and precious metals and ores.\*\*

\* Ref. Arnold Arboretum of Harvard Univ.

\*\* Ref. Guide to Southern Trees. by E. S. & J. G. Harrar.



flower



leaf



profile

"The southern Appalachians...make up the mountainous areas of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. This is a world where you see mountains rolling like waves, a high, tumbled world fading into the haze, where as many as 130 different species of flowering trees and 11 conifers can be found---more total species than grow in all of Europe".

(from A Field Guide to the Trees and Shrubs of the Southern Appalachians. Swanson, R.E., 1994, p.3.



## CAROLINA MOUNTAIN LAND CONSERVANCY

Imagine 600 acres (a square mile) of land lying on the slopes of Little Pisgah Mountain, the highest point in Henderson County, just north of the biologically significant Hickorynut Gorge. Imagine the land covered with trees, uncut for over 60 years, with rich hardwood coves, rock outcrops and a clear running stream with a waterfall running through a deep cleft in the rocks. This land has been owned for 30 years by botanical club members, Tom and Glenna Florence. As they shared the land with family and friends, the forest continued to mature safe from clear cuts, roads and development.

Tom and Glenna were looking for a way to ensure this wooded land would be kept forever in its natural state. In 1994 they began talking with a newly formed local land trust, the Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy (formerly the Natural Heritage Trust of Henderson County). After consulting with their personal attorney and the trust's conservation attorney, they decided to reserve 29 acres of land with two residences for themselves and their children and to donate the surrounding 590 acres to the land trust. On October 1st, Tom and Glenna deeded a one-half undivided interest in the land to the Conservancy. Their plan is to transfer the remaining property within a six year period.

Shawn Oakley, a botanist with the Natural Heritage Program, donated his time this spring and found the rare nodding mandarin (Prosartes maculata) and the uncommon grotto alumroot (Heuchera parviflora var. parviflora) on the property. The Florences have found yellow ladyslipper, yellow fringed orchid, the large whorled pogonia (Isotria verticillata) and the uncommon kidney leaf twayblade (Listera smallii). Biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service anticipate that two species of special concern are on the property -- the green salamander and the southern Appalachian wood rat.

With Henderson County and nearby Asheville developing so fast, this land gift has far more significance than its protection of a natural area. It will continue to be a scenic viewshed for residents of neighboring areas and visiting tourists while its thousands of trees will assist in keeping our air clean. Land gifts such as this preserve the quality of life so prized by those of us who live here.

-Anne Ulinski, Chairman, Land Review Committee, Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy



## RECORDER'S REPORT FOR AUGUST THROUGH OCTOBER.....ERIKA S. PARM

Although our summer and fall weather was generally clear with both warm and cold periods; unfortunately for us several scheduled Fridays were rainy. The Frying Pan Gap trip on Aug. 9 departed from the Ranger Station, but shortly after we arrived on the parkway rain began and the trip was cancelled. Millie Blaha and I, however, continued south on the Parkway and we were doubly rewarded with sunshine and many looks at featherfleece (Stenanthium graminium). We had never seen so many of them along the Parkway. Other trips cancelled because of rain were Lake Issaqueena on Sept. 6, Graveyard Fields on Sept. 27 and Jones Gap on Oct. 18.

There was a magnificent display of coreopsis and black-eyed susans at the Bee Tree Gap meadow on Aug. 2. This trip was held later in the season than usual, so the phlox were past their peak bloom. Unfortunately several of the club members, including the trip recorder, missed this beautiful display, because of clutch failure on the recorder's car. The recorder and her passengers were taken home by other club members.

The mushroom walk on Aug. 16 produced about 30 colorful species, but most members decided the intricacies of identification were too involved to become a collector and consumer of edible mushrooms. The Sky Valley Road trip to Pinnacle Mountain on Aug. 23 was a success with over 50 species seen. The following week's trip, on the other hand, was unsuccessful. It was scheduled as a blueberry picking hike to Ivistor Gap. The leaders found almost no blueberries there, so they changed the destination to Graveyard Fields. It also proved to be less than fruitful and only a few berries were picked by the group. The Blue Ridge Parkway trip south on Sept. 13 was notable--prolific displays of grass of Parnassus, gentians, and turtleheads, all at their peak, plus many other fall flowers. Jackson Park on Sept. 20, Whiteside Mt. on Oct. 11 and Tanbark Tunnel (substituted for Albright Grove) on Oct. 25 were all successfully completed.

The winter indoor meetings will start with a bang with Dick Smith's program "Not Better - But Different". His slide program will highlight the plants of our deserts, seacoasts, cypress swamps and alpine tundra. Let's all support the speaker and get out to Hendersonville and Givens Estates for their programs.

### NOTES OF INTEREST

The Editors were pleased and flattered to receive this note from THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN: "Dan Pittillo gave me your name and address as someone I should contact concerning the newsletter SHORTIA. I am a bryologist at The New York Botanical Garden and am interested in getting it for the Garden's library. I am also interested in obtaining as many of the back issues as are available. I would appreciate any information that you can provide. Thank you. I look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely, (signed) William R. Buck.

We are sending available back issues of SHORTIA.

A biologist, Bambi Teague, from the BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY called to request help from WCBC. Bambi and her co-workers Lisa Jamison and Lillian McElrath, wish to meet with interested WCBC members to explore ways to enhance our mutual interests in wildflower preservation. A meeting will be arranged early in 1997. We are also sending them Shortia.



**Ferguson, Ellen:** 708 Newfound Rd., Leicester, NC 28748 (704) 683-2485. Has lived in the area since 1980. Recently received her RN degree. Enjoys hiking and learned of WCBC through friend, Susan Isley.



**King, Rolland and Francine:** 8 Kings Drive, Lake Lure, NC 28746. (704) 625-4130; winter (Nov.-May) 916 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota, FL 34236. (941) 365-3426. In the summer months Rolland and Francine reside on their 800 acre farm in Fairfield. Both have an interest in the outdoors and nature. They learned of the WCBC through member Lucie Strayer and have enjoyed several Club hikes.

**Merkle, Ralph and Mary:** 180 Tranquility Pl., Hendersonville, NC 28739 (704) 692-9248. Ralph, a retired engineer, and Mary, a retired school teacher, have lived in the area 15 years. Their primary interest is in rocks and minerals but enjoy plants and gardening. Mary belongs the Orchid Club in Asheville. They are neighbors of WCBC members Augie and Mary Lou Kehr.

**O'Grady, Dana:** 7149 Augusta Dr., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043.

#### FRINGED GENTIAN---A SPECIAL FLOWER.....ELTON and ALINE HANSENS

A beautiful sunny day in late October makes one want to walk, and look, and listen. We went forth following a dirt road that bordered a large marsh in southern Michigan. We found a few asters still in bloom but the fields of goldenrod had become gray stalks. Some of the shrubs were heavy with berries but those attractive to birds were mostly picked clean. The brilliant fall foliage of poison sumac, common in this area, was gone.

Suddenly deep blue color, deeper than the bright blue sky above caught my eye. A few more steps and I stooped down and recognized the beautiful flower of the fringed gentian, (Gentiana crinita).

Fringed gentian is one of the most famous of flowers and is recorded as rare wherever it grows. We have seen it only in Michigan. In North Carolina Radford, Ahles and Bell report them in Ashe, Clay and Macon Counties which appear to be the southern limit for the species.

The plant grows to a height of 1 to 3 ft. Single flowers grow on long stalks. Four delicately fringed petals flare out from the deep corolla tube. As the sun disappears the flowers close to open again with the rising sun. Perhaps this species is rare because it blooms in September and October, bearing relatively few flowers and these have difficulty producing seeds so late in the year. Whatever the reason, fringed gentian is very beautiful and worthy of preservation.



In response to SHORTIA's list of My UN-FAVORITE Plants:

Dear SHORTIA,

How could you?! There on your list of My UN-FAVORITE Plants stand two of my FAVORITES! I am leaping to their defense.

I note that ALL plants listed either feel bad (devil's walking stick, blackberry with thorns, nettles, stick-tights), or taste bad (castor oil), or smell bad (skunk cabbage, but only when the leaf is damaged), or tickle (sneezeweed; does it?), or irritate (poison ivy). Taste, smell, touch--three of the five senses. What about the other two? Plants aren't noisy, so hearing doesn't apply. What about seeing? Do we rule that out when selecting UN-favorites?

The first UN-favorite I defend is poison ivy. Please note: I am highly susceptible to poison ivy. I blister and ooze with the best of the afflicted. But I am also susceptible to beauty.

Consider the wee triplets of leaves poison ivy displays in spring. A close look is easy--buds can be found at any human height--and greatly rewarding. Try a hand lens on them. Surprised? They're handsomely deep red and shiny and veined to perfection.

Consider the dainty flowers. Poison ivy flowers? Prevalent in spring, miniature and green, they blend into surroundings so beautifully that few people notice them, one reason I enjoy them so. They're rather private! Competition for observing is not pushy. One can enjoy them at leisure, unhurried. But of course, picking a bouquet is not recommended.

Consider the vine. It engulfs the ground or climbs a tree and fills all with lush foliage, rich green, shiny, and handsome. How nursery centers and garden catalogs would welcome it if it weren't a do-not-touch species! From spring through fall, it's a great groundcover in shady or sunny spots. Yes, it can get out of hand, but so do pachysandra and periwinkle.

Consider its autumn leaves, one of fall's finest displays. Some leaves turn intense yellow, especially striking against a shadowed background. Some turn red. Watch out for magnificence, the best word to describe the vine's purples, fire-chief reds, and startling red-oranges. Many innocent leaf watchers who enjoy poison ivy's brilliant fall colors would be astonished to know they are admiring, ugh, poison ivy!

Even after leaves drop, poison ivy provides interest. On one autumn beach, Tom and I met a woman gathering sprigs. She told how she enjoyed returning there each fall to gather bayberries. I suggested gently that maybe her bouquet was not bayberries. She announced confidently, "I've been gathering bayberries here for years," implying, emphatically, that she knew them when she saw them. ??? Many bayberry shrubs did surround us, and yes, they were loaded with berries, but that woman had arms loaded with sprigs of poison ivy berries! As she marched off, I tried to suppress a desire for her to break out briefly with a good dose of poison ivy rash just to emphasize my point. But at least she appreciated poison ivy's artistic sprigs, laden with clusters of golden-tan berries, just the size of bayberries!

The second UN-favorite really hit hard, for I had lived 17 years in NJ with a boggy area in my back yard where a fine stand of skunk cabbage thrived. But that could be at least four pages!

*Barbara Hollowell*



As some of you know, I am having trouble walking because of my left leg, especially on hilly terrain. I took an aquatic program this summer, but it has not helped; more slow walking this fall may help. Otherwise, I will be forced to consider an operation. As an arm chair traveller with "you all" this year I have really enjoyed the Recorder's Report by Erika.

Anne Ulinski's report in the autumn Shortia is inspiring and brings back many memories. It reminds me about the vascular-plant checklist I am compiling for Deerlake (our subdivision). I have found about 250 species and have been able to save more than 25 locally "rare" plants from grass cutters, earth movers, tree cutters, etc. Recently I found two plants of Coreopsis major, with its false whorled-leaf pattern. It actually has divided opposite leaves. They are growing in the path of a driveway that is yet to be built and they will be moved. I found a small patch of sneezeweed (Helenium autumnale) that was not in seed, but alas, they were cut down. Fortunately I found one single young plant on Stone Drive and hope it will not be cut.

I still have some unknowns: One from a patch of small purple-leaved composites was successfully moved from the woods to be identified later. I believe it will be a Eupatorium. On the other hand, a single strange plant on a storm drain has such tiny flowers I must use a hand lens to even see them. I hope it sets fruits and seeds. My guess is that it is Crotonopsis. Betty is worried about the vine growing over some of our azaleas; it is a monster with heart-shaped leaves and flower heads like a red clover that stayed in bud for weeks. I really want it to bloom before it completely takes over.

One of our joys is finding a new visitor to the naturalized area along our driveway. It is purple milkwort (Polygala sanguinea). I have only seen a few of these in Deerlake this year. Our roadside colony of rose-pink (Sabatia angularis) was lost this year because of modification of its habitat or the bad winter.

Sue, our artistic neighbor, found a slender ladies' tresses (Spiranthes lacera) in bloom in the poorest soil next to her garage. I had just shown her our blooming plant and the next day the blooms were gone.

I enjoyed Dick Smith's notes about Elephantopus, a favorite of mine. Many thanks to Ruth Hoerich for being so patient with me. (Editor's Note: Dr. Gunn prepares the mailing labels for Shortia and Ruth Hoerich does the mailing.)

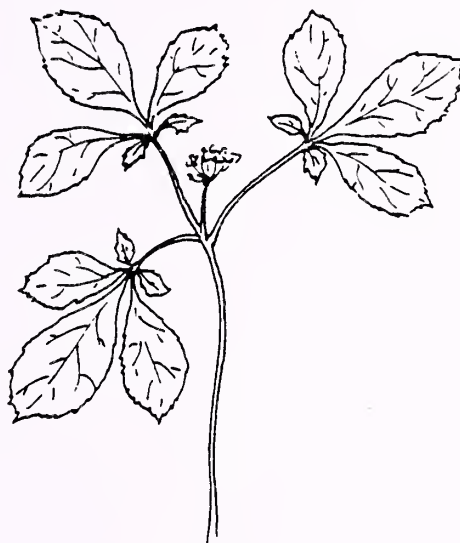




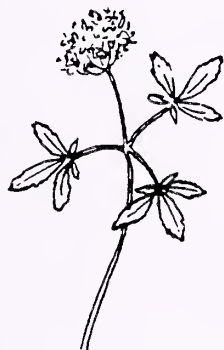
# LOOK AGAIN !

It is probably safe to say that anyone who has botanized in the eastern mountains has made at least one conscious attempt at finding Ginseng. The search is made especially tantalizing by the knowledge that there are places where it grows in relative abundance--although perhaps known only to "sang diggers."

When present, the bright red berries make the task easier, but in summer the tiny greenish flowers are insignificant so usually it is the foliage that one must look for. Panax quinquefolius--to give it its scientific name--averages about 15 inches in height. Typically the stem terminates in a whorl of 3 long-stalked, palmately compound leaves each consisting of 5 stalked leaflets with toothed margins, the lowermost pair being conspicuously smaller than the rest. The flowers are borne in a stalked umbel.



*P. QUINQUEFOLIUS*



*P. TRIFOLIUS*

Dwarf Ginseng (*P. trifolius*) is common in the north but rather scarce in the southern mountains (but not because of any valuable properties). It is less than 8 inches tall, and its 3 to 5 leaflets are sessile. The flowers are white, crowded in a rounded umbel, and appear in early spring; they are followed by yellowish berries.

*Dick Smith*





S H O R T I A

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